

**GE-Pittsfield Citizen's Coordinating Council
Berkshire Community College
Susan B. Anthony Room
May 3, 2000
Meeting Highlights**

Prepared by the Massachusetts Office of Dispute Resolution.

Participants

There were 18 members of the CCC present and 4 people in the audience.

Introductions and Review of Agenda

Council members introduced themselves. The proposed agenda for the evening and the notes from the last meeting were reviewed and approved.

Updates

GE

Brownfields activity limited from last meeting.

½ Mile- Andy Silfer

DNAPL removal completed.

Removed sheet pile from cell C.

Cell D began today, to be completed by Friday.

Roughly 600ft have been remediated & restored.

Vegetation removed and sheet pile installation begun 800ft downstream of Newell St. bridge

Removal in next cell to begin next week.

1100 gallons DNAPL removed manually.

Volume of oil in separation tank currently unknown but appears to be large.

After excavation, DNAPL still coming in at 8-9ft depth- GEA agencies agreed to install recovery system- stone, HPDE liner. 120 gallons + 300 gallons of recovered. No measurable DNAPL present in well over weekend- think refilling cell with water created intensified flush of oil that has now tapered off. Continue to monitor and recover as necessary.

Question re: Restoration in river. Channel restoration done as part of work in river after remediation complete.

Bank restoration takes place in spring and fall. Planting of upper 800ft will take place in May. Local sources of plant material (Amherst area). GE to meet with Tom O'Brien + Trustee reps to make sure everyone is in agreement on specifications.

Tom O'Brien: only bank restoration so far has been stabilization of banks with erosion control mat and broadcast grass seed.

Residential Fill Removal- Dick Gates

Initiation of annual spring inspections of properties that were restored.

Inspected sod and planting to determine if landscaping needs to be redone. 250 properties sampled, 464 have more than 2ppm. 9 new properties had begun to be sampled.

Maxymillion will be constructor again. Remediation talks with owners to start within a week or so.

EPA- Bryan Olson

CD: Still in process of responding to comments on CD. Expect to decide how to move forward on CD within next few weeks. Want to discuss with stakeholders before doing so- Court proceeding may affect schedule.

EE/CA work: EPA to present recommendations to Remedy Review Board week of May 15. HRI & GE have made recommendations to Board. Based on Board's recommendations, EPA will put recommended remedies out for public comment starting in middle of July- mid September. They will also hold a public meeting. Trying to set up neighborhood meetings with homeowners in EEICA stretch to sit down and discuss types of disruption they can anticipate.

20s, 30s, 40s complexes: EPA sent comment letter to GE on proposal. GE will resubmit proposal based on comments. EPA received and understood comments on proposal from CCC members.

Rest of River: EPA expects to get some data out on Rest of River early to mid summer but must confirm with Susan Sversky.

DEP- Lyn Cutler

Residential fill properties: Process review documents under internal review.

Hope to get out for public comment very soon. Hope to have public meeting towards the end of this month to get property owners who have had properties remediated together with those who are about to be remediated. Drafts will be sent out to Ad Hoc Committee on Residential Fill Removal and finalized before meeting.

West Branch: Initial sampling at Dorothy Amos Park resulted in its closing in December 1996. Extensive sampling occurred through the following spring, followed by remediation and reopening in summer of 1998. EPA contractors did sampling upstream of confluence and found elevated levels PCB's (60ppm). Sampling progressed upstream to determine possible source. Next sampling effort concentrated at Dorothy Amos Park. Split samples with GE- both show elevated levels near park. Based on sampling results, DEP sent letter requesting that GE submit sampling proposal to evaluate West Bank from park down to confluence. GE proposal consistent with EPA sampling approach for East Branch. Sampling along transect spaced at 400ft, also some hot spot sampling near park. DEP approved Scope of Work with conditions. Sampling will take place between mid-May & mid-June at periods of lowest flow. Asked for additional sampling near park at locations where there was scarcity of samples. Want sampling upstream to Danforth Street to get better idea of background. Also requested additional bank soil sampling on both banks at park. Requesting posting of additional fish consumption advisory on west branch. Also requested that within 30 days of receipt of letter, GE shall

submit detailed description of how it proposes to sample cobble reach where sampling may be difficult.

CCC Comments and Questions

Concerned expressed that the Southwest Branch is stocked with fish and that people may not be aware that they shouldn't be fishing there; signs should be posted. Need to determine whether a dam still exists that would prevent fish migration. Shep Evans to get information on contact person at HVA west branch stream team. - Dan Moragtro stated that the two major dams that used to be out there are now well breached. If no dams exist, then the river shouldn't be stocked with fish. EPA and DEP to follow up. Bill Cornier to follow up stream team and Tom Keefe (fish & wildlife)

Question: will sampling continue up to King Street dump? Response: will depend on sampling results from new study. King Street is on separate track GE has been requested by DEP to do sampling but may or may not do sampling. GE decision will be based on results of Request for Information process. EPA and DEP assured CCC that sampling will be done.

DPH- Jon Soderberg

Health Assessments: Former Oxbows, Hill 98, Newell St.. 2 and Lyman St. public health assessments that went to EPA in March are under review. Expect release in mid-summer. East St. 1, East St. 2 and Unkamet Brook: out to EPA late May to mid-June. Expect release to public in mid-summer.

Housatonic Advisory Committee on Health Studies (citizens) – 1st meeting was held in March. Provided updates on studies. Advisory Board is sounding board for participants to voice concerns.

Breast Cancer Pilot study- sample analyses expected to be completed in mid-June. Will then progress to data analysis. Expect report and release in summer.

Committee Report (panel of experts) expected out in summer prior to release of health assessments.

CCC Comments and questions: Some areas not currently open to public (East Street) so how can you collect data? EPA responded that these areas were open to public at one time and to GE workers, so they are being evaluated.

NRD- Dale Young

Next two steps: determine disbursements of funds and initiate MOA. After trustee Council is formed, first issue will be to determine ex officio membership.

Memorandum of Agreement.

MOA will be implemented after CD is entered. Draft MOA will be available for public review

Trustee Selection: Dale will the Massachusetts Trustee. Veranica Burello will be representative from US Fish and Wildlife. NOAA and Connecticut representatives still undetermined.

Presentation and Discussion of Action Items Document

The facilitator (Harry) distributed a draft "Action Item Tracking List" form. He stated that it was created in response to requests by the CCC to better note and

track issues that require some sort of action. The form notes the date the item was listed, a description of the action, the person responsible for the action, and the due date. The form also has a column for "Updates". It was noted that this section will include regular updates (occur at all meetings), as well as any other requested updates. The final part of the form has a "Completed Items" section. This section will list finished items from the previous meeting. Items will not accrue in this section, rather they will remain there for one meeting and then be saved separately. This is to avoid creating a massive ongoing document. Discussion ensued about what would be listed on the form. It was decided that the form should be used for responses to comments if a commitment was made to respond at a later date and specific "to do's".

Revisiting Communication issues within the CCC

A letter from Benno was distributed. After some initial discussion, it was decided to postpone discussion to a later meeting when more members and Benno could be present. Bryan reiterated that EPA is here to support groups- want CCC to decide how the group should function. Need members to provide input on how they want to function.

Other Issues: Connecticut stakeholders: Judy Herkimer, a recent addition to the CCC from Connecticut, introduced herself and noted that she represents the Housatonic Environmental Action League (HEAL). She requested that the CCC start sounding out more stakeholders from Connecticut. She also asked that the Connecticut counterparts to the Massachusetts environmental officials that are on the CCC be encouraged to participate. The facilitator noted that he has begun this process and will discuss it with the CCC when he has more information. Judy noted that she would prefer to have a separate CCC entity in Connecticut, partly due to travelling and timing concerns. She suggested that the current CCC and a Connecticut CCC could provide representatives for each group's meeting to present updates. She also requested that the CD and other information be located at locations south of Hartford so southern Connecticut stakeholders will have better access to information.

DEP and other CCC members commented that there may not be a current need to meet in CT; there are no "Rest of River" reports to discuss that extend into CT as yet. EPA suggested having smaller meetings and less frequently with CT people. Not sure the expense of a facilitator and formation of a separate group is justified at this time. As a first step in exploring this issue, it was proposed that the CCC conduct the June meeting closer to CT in order to update the CT stakeholders, but also to enable the CCC to hear CT stakeholder issues. Judy noted that river PCB issues may be more current in CT than people realize due to a series of dams coming up for FERC re-licensing (license can be in effect for 30 years). The FERC could require dredging behind dams before it can be re-licensed. All were in favor of the proposal to hold the June meeting closer to CT and devote it to CT issues. EPA will present upstream and rest of river work. CT DEP and NRD will be contacted as well. Judy volunteered to contact Housatonic River Committee and Northwest CT Council of Governments.